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STATE FOR IO AND NEA/MAG
STATE PLS REPEAT TO NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT COLLECTIVE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KNNP](#) [WI](#) [ZI](#) [AG](#) [ZP](#) [ZR](#) [MO](#)
SUBJECT: NAM MINISTERIAL: SNOOZING DINOSAUR MUTTERS IN ITS
SLEEP

Classified By: Acting PolCouns David Brownstein for Reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d)

Summary

¶1. (C/NF) Moroccan MFA Chief of Staff Nasser Bourita (strictly protect) said that Iran "did not get most of what it wanted" on the issue of its nuclear and missile programs during the recent Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Ministerial in Tehran. He expressed happiness with the more Morocco-friendly statement on Western Sahara that came out of the meeting. On Zimbabwe, Bourita explained that Morocco led the charge to pare an unfocused and lengthy resolution down to a manageable and more balanced half-page document. Bourita described the NAM overall as a napping dinosaur and said the meeting was poorly attended. He complained that the organization has been "hijacked by radical actors" and now serves as a forum for rhetoric of a bygone era rather than constructive action. He noted that the full final conference statement contains language critical of the U.S. on several issues and advised the USG to engage the NAM on more than just Iran. End Summary.

Iran Did Not Get Everything It Wanted

¶2. (C/NF) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Chief of Staff Nasser Bourita (strictly protect) told PolOff on August 1 that, despite hosting the 15th Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in Tehran, Iran "did not get most of what it wanted" regarding its nuclear and missile programs. The NAM's final statement on the issue, which Bourita said was the subject of heated debate, reaffirmed states' sovereign right to pursue peaceful nuclear programs, but firmly endorsed International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) oversight of such efforts and encouraged Iran to continue cooperation with the international body.

¶3. (C/NF) Bourita, who had just returned from the July 27 through 30 meeting, added that Iran had hoped to receive formal endorsement of its desire to serve as the Gulf region's "security spokesman" in discussions with the UN, U.S. and other international actors on the question of security guarantees. The Moroccan delegation intensely and successfully worked the margins of the Ministerial to discourage support for the motion, arguing that Iran had too

many divergent interests from other Gulf states to make the proposition viable.

Morocco/Algeria: Apparently, We CAN All Get Along

¶4. (C/NF) Bourita expressed pleasure at the final statement on Western Sahara saying that, for the first time, the NAM did not directly link self-determination to eventual independence for the territory. It also endorsed all Security Council Resolutions related to the issue and took note of developments since 2006. The document contained language strongly supportive of the UN Secretary General's Personal Envoy, which Bourita said was a specific endorsement of the embattled Peter Van Walsum, and approved of the negotiation process. Most importantly, he continued, the statement encouraged the national parties to work with the UN and "with each other," which Bourita claimed was a tacit admission that a solution to the issue was to be found in improved relations between Morocco and Algeria.

¶5. (C/NF) Bourita described as "surprisingly constructive" direct discussions with Algeria on the statement's language, mediated by NAM Chair Cuba and led, on the Moroccan side, by Bourita himself. Despite initial attempts by the Algerian delegation to frame the debate in terms of colonialism, his counterparts quickly settled into a pragmatic exchange on the issues. The fact that they agreed on the "precedent-setting" final wording with little rancor, and that the resolution did not become a point of contention within the wider meeting, indicated a degree of acceptance of the Moroccan point of view, Bourita asserted.

Viva Mugabe, Champion of the Oppressed Masses

¶6. (C/NF) The initial resolution on Zimbabwe, introduced by Angola, was three pages long and contained much "Soviet era" verbiage praising Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and South African President Thabo Mbeki, Bourita groaned. Morocco attempted to subtly re-shape the draft and discussion without openly criticizing the document and goaded other nations, such as Senegal, into suggesting amendments and modifications. The final product was reduced to half a page and was more "balanced and constructive." It reaffirmed the July 1 resolution on the dispute adopted by the African Union at Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt, and encouraged continuation of the current talks being held under Southern African Development Community (SADC) auspices. It also included "vestigial language" condemning unilateral sanctions on Zimbabwe that "crawled into the document from the 1970s and 80s," he scoffed.

A Nice Place for Pictures, Not Much Else

¶7. (C/NF) Bourita said the meeting was poorly attended and, after opening statements, few foreign ministers sat in on the proceedings. If it had not been for the importance Morocco attached to the Sahara resolution, Bourita commented, Foreign Minister Fassi-Fihri would not have gone. As it was, Fassi-Fihri had a proxy read his opening statement as he thought it was "beneath his dignity to speak to an empty hall." Debate during the Ministerial was negligible except, according to Bourita, when Morocco provoked discussion on Iran and Zimbabwe. Members simply entered reams of resolutions into the record, which were then incorporated into conference proceedings unedited and unexamined. "The Ministerials have become a place to get your picture taken, and then go home," he sighed.

Sleeping Dinosaur with A Big Body and Small Brain

¶8. (C/NF) Bourita described the NAM overall as a sleeping dinosaur with a big body and small brain. He said it has been hijacked by "radicals" such as Venezuela, Iran and Cuba, which use it as a rhetorical soapbox rather than as a venue for policy coordination. "How can you take an organization seriously whose last four meetings have been in Caracas, Havana and Tehran," he asked. He also complained that discussion still often centered around "liberation struggle" questions from the 1970s and 1980s. Bourita suggested that, ideally, a modernized NAM should be a vehicle for designing and coordinating "third way" strategies focused on promoting constructive engagement and dialogue between developing and developed countries. He said a secretariat was necessary to help it effectively address technical issues such as Iran's arms program, but countries that could afford to fund a permanent staff, such as the Gulf states, are disengaged from the Movement. Unless moderate members like Morocco and others assume responsibility for pushing change, the NAM will "remain a joke." In Tehran, he added, the NAM dinosaur just "talked in its sleep" but did not accomplish much.

Engage the NAM on More than just Iran

¶9. (C/NF) Bourita chided the USG for "not having come to Morocco sooner" regarding engagement with the NAM. He said that the full final conference statement contains language critical of the U.S. on several issues not related to Iran, and that a more comprehensive approach should be undertaken. At the same time, he made clear that he did not think the NAM warranted a great deal of USG time and effort, except insofar as to encourage centrist members to take a more active and moderating role. As part of Morocco's activities in this regard, Bourita said that FM Fassi-Fihri delivered a

"strongly worded" letter from King Mohammed VI to Iranian President Ahmedinejad on the need for religious, political and military temperance in the volatile Gulf region. He expressed hope for a change in the Movement's tone and direction when Egypt takes over the Chairmanship in 2009, and said that Rabat intended to discuss some its concerns with Cairo.

Comment

¶10. (C/NF) Bourita's happiness at having won symbolic victories on Iran, Western Sahara and Zimbabwe was palpable. Despite what he described as the NAM's current ineffectiveness, he appeared to view the body as a vehicle through which Morocco could demonstrate its ability and willingness to serve as an effective behind-the-scenes policy shaper and moderate actor. His characterization of the NAM as having been hijacked by radical actors is somewhat akin to describing the Mafia as being infiltrated by criminals, but he appears to be committed to moving the NAM towards a more practical and relevant role. He shied away from characterizing his positive experiences with the Algerian delegation as a deliberately positive signal from Algiers, but expressed hope for continued progress. Bourita provided PolOff with copies of key NAM statements, which have been scanned and emailed to NEA/MAG. End Comment.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/rabat>

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